

The Judicial Council of California is the constitutionally created policymaking body of the California courts. The council meets at least six times a year for business meetings that are open to the public and videocast live via the California Courts website. What follows is a formatted and unedited transcript of the last meeting. The official record of each meeting, the meeting minutes, are usually approved by the council at the next business meeting. Much more information about this meeting, the work of the Judicial Council, and the role of the state court system is available on the California Courts website at *courts.ca.gov*.

>> Friday, December 12, 2025. The meeting is now in session. During our technical checks for this live webcast, we have confirmed the attendance of a quorum of Judicial Council members. Based on the agenda, we plan to adjourn today at about 11:55. I want to begin our meeting by acknowledging some special guests who are joining us for our council meeting today. We're joined by participants and faculty with our New Judge Orientation program. I wanted to give a special thanks to our faculty members. We have Judge Darwin from San Francisco Superior Court, Judge Gazzaniga, Judge Menninger, and Judge Stockdale Coleman. We welcome them to the NJO earlier in the week and also we had members from the newly appointed some call baby judges, but I don't know if that's appropriate, the new judges, who we welcome to the court as well. We will now begin with our public comment period. We welcome public comments and appreciate the time and effort that community members and interested parties take to provide them, whether in writing or in person. We did receive some in advance in writing. And I think we also have some remotely. All comments are noted and comments on specific agenda items, whether on the consent or the discussion or more general topics about judicial administration, all of that helps us to better understand the issues that Californians face when accessing our court system. Where further consideration or some type of response is warranted, we will follow up after the meeting as appropriate. However, it is important to note that council members cannot investigate or intervene on behalf of any party in a case or offer any type of legal advice to a member of the public. Now, I will turn it over to the council's Executive and Planning Committee chair, Justice Brad Hill, to begin the public comment.

>> Thank you very much, Chief. I believe we have two remote speakers, but I'll begin by calling the speakers in just a moment. We will then proceed to call in-person public comment. All speakers will have up to three minutes to present their comments. When your name is called, please turn on your camera, unmute your microphone, and begin by stating your name, and if applicable your title and affiliation. A timer is displayed on the screen to help you keep track of your allotted time. We'll help you as well. And the light will change from green to yellow when you have one minute remaining. A red light will appear when your time is expired and please begin your concluding remarks when you see the yellow light. Let's turn to our first speaker, remotely, Mr. Ignacio Hernandez. I believe we were told he's with us and we'll hopefully see him pop up momentarily. Do you hear us?

>> Yes, can you hear me?

>> We can. much for joining us. And please proceed.

>> Yeah, I apologize. I was multitasking, had to drop my kid off somewhere and I had to pull over to speak. Good morning. I'm Ignacio Hernandez, I'm here on behalf of the California Federation of Interpreters, a statewide interpreter union. There is actually multiple items I would like to speak on and so I don't know how you do the timing, but I'll try to get my comments done in three minutes. In regards to the court interpreter workforce pilot program report, we are encouraged with the work that has been done on it. CFI and myself in particular, we drafted the pilot program and negotiated with Judicial Council. We're pleased that the program was adopted and is in effect and is moving forward. And we are encouraged with the results. We also encourage you to continue to use it, expand it, and let's find more funding for that going forward. That being said, the efforts that are made with the pilot program are being undermined on a daily basis in our courts and we encourage you as you look at the legislative priorities and also looking at the funding requirements including the reserves for local courts, we need you to understand that the way funding is being managed right now, both at the local courts and by the Judicial Council is absolutely diluting and undermining the efforts to increase court interpreter workforce employees in California right now. As you know, this is a requirement. The state Constitution requires an interpreter in criminal cases, federal civil rights laws require it in civil cases at no cost. I was in the meetings with the U.S. DOJ years ago, when they were going to file against California for failure to provide interpreters in every case at no cost. And we are at a crisis mode because the local courts are stuck in a budgetary conundrum because they're told they are not guaranteed funding for court interpreters. The budget allocation methodology adopted by the Judicial Council during COVID has created an artificial cap on spending for court interpreters. The local courts are now looking at it as if they only have X amount of money to spend, as opposed to being user driven, need driven and that's exactly how the court interpreter line item is constructed. It is supposed to be need based and the funding then is provided. Right now local courts are either refusing to hire new court interpreters, they're refusing to pay raises to retain court interpreters and oftentimes refusing to fill spots for court interpreters because they say the Judicial Council allocation is creating this cap and the additional pressure of having to preserve a reserve has put them in a situation where they cannot spend the money or they believe they cannot spend the money. And some courts are being told they have spent too much money on court interpreters. There are courts every day, criminal cases included, I just got a report this week, that are being continued multiple times because interpreters are not made available. That is problematic.

>> Just so you know, you're out of time. I'll put an extra minute on the clock, but if you wouldn't mind perhaps wrapping up, we would appreciate it.

>> And let me say, I've spoken to Judicial Council many times. I really wish the comments would be when these items come up because I'm covering two or three items. And I wish I could be available to answer questions. Or folks would ask questions about these items because I think ultimately we have the same goal, which is ensuring that everyone gets an interpreter when they need it. And in an efficient way. One other thing, in local courts, as I said, just this last two weeks, we are hearing that cases are being continued multiple times. And we're being

told that the record, the minute orders are saying continue because no interpreter and local courts are saying, no, strike that, do not put that on the record because there won't be a paper trail. So there is a lot of things to figure out, but right now, the allocation methodology that was created by Judicial Council is creating more problems and is undermining the very efforts that we're applauding ourselves for in creating the workforce development program for interpreters. I'm available for questions.

>> Thank you. I don't believe we have any questions at this particular time. But thank you for joining us.

>> Really?

>> Well, this isn't really a question and answer session. It is a time for public comment. But we received that comment and we appreciate you joining us.

>> Will there be an opportunity when the line items come up to answer questions if anyone has?

>> Well, certainly if there are any, we could contact you offline, but it is not an opportunity just because of the timing issues that we have. But we thank you and we'll look forward.

>> How do you receive comments? If anyone has questions about these items, how are they answered today?

>> By either staff or prior communications with you. But we will definitely be talking to you in the future, because you're an important part of this process. Thank you very, very much. We do have another public comment via remote and it is Venus Gist. I may not have done justice to your name. Are you with us?

>> Yes, can you hear me? I don't know if you can see me.

>> We can't see you, but we can hear you. You have three minutes. Now we can see you.

>> Okay, great. Thank you. I am commenting on, I live in the Alameda County area. I don't know if you all are aware just nationwide that we're dealing with an epidemic of abuse through our probate court systems. And some of the things that are happening is violations of codes and laws in regards to, you know, petitioners. And just having their rights violated, like, for instance, we have a case and her name is Zakia Jendaye. Her trust has been invalidated. She has all the proof of her college professor who wanted her to be her, you know, executor, her estate, and this is being violated. And we are beginning to take action, and we're going to have a town hall in Alameda County in January. We have talked to public servants here in our community, Board of Supervisor Nate Miley is on board with us, trying to improve what is occurring in the probate court system. Another thing, like, due processes or even if you are representing

yourself, pro per or pro se, being able to speak and judges not having prejudices against you because you want to represent yourself. Those are some of the things we're encountering. There is more. I personally have my own experience, back in, well, it started in 2018 with my own family. And I had a very egregious conservator. I don't think the judge was fair. I think they were in collusion. And this is occurring and happening. We're not saying all courts are bad. And criminal. But there is some stuff happening on the bench that shouldn't be occurring. And are you all aware of this? That's just my question.

>> You know, you have about a minute left, so if you wouldn't mind proceeding, this isn't really a question and answer session.

>> Yeah, I know. I just wanted to know if you were aware. But basically this is my first public comment here. We're going to continue. Others will come and share their views. There have been filings and violations. And we just are the people here who deserve to be treated. Assets are being confiscated and taken, you know, people are losing their estates, their property. Some elderly people do not want to be conserved. They want their families to take care of them. They want to stay in their home. So, these are some of the circumstances that we're facing, you know, being in the probate court. Justice isn't always prevailing. So, thank you for this time. And hope to speak with you all again.

>> Well, thank you.

>> And bring others.

>> Well, thank you very much. We appreciate you being a part of the process. Thank you.

>> You're welcome.

>> Now we're going to turn to the in-person portion of our session today. And please begin by stating your name, and I believe we have one individual here, and if applicable your title and affiliation. On the podium as you know are lights that will inform you of the time you have remaining. Again, a yellow light will come on when you have one minute, a red light will come on when your time has expired. And our one speaker is Mr. Kai On. It's nice to have you with us.

>> Good morning, council members. My name is Kai On from Sacramento. I'm here again about in 2023 Sacramento DA office and SPD provide fake information. My father wouldn't come along in DA case number 99F08735. I campaign Sacramento DA, Mr. Thien Ho, and Attorney General Mr. Robert Bonta because they did not investigate this case. I state my campaign to commend action. Sacramento did not investigate. So I complain Sacramento Superior Court presiding judge. I have talked a lot about this incident. 36 years ago, October 23, my missing father, I ran to the scene. One female officer who was not wearing uniform showed me my father's wallet and ID. She told me my father's body was removed from the

scene and it was a hit and run. It was 26 years ago. I already receive fake information. In about two hours from my father was killed, someone already order an obstruction of justice activity. In some period of time, there must be some political power or high level government office. The officer in the State Bar and the official in this building are able to review the DA case file. They know this file and that killed my father are fake information. However, they don't speak out. Honorable Guerrero, in April Judicial Council meeting with a letter I was expecting you to look into this issue. The justice system and agency under your supervision are helping to cover up a scandal 26 years ago during the investigation of the death of my father. Honorable Guerrero, can you please provide response to my request?

>> This isn't a session where we go through responses and questions and answers, but we do receive testimony and we appreciate as always your comments. Do you have anything else you would like to share? You're almost out of time?

>> Thank you for your time.

>> Thank you very much. Good to have you with us. And, Chief, that concludes our remote and in-person comments.

>> Thank you, Justice Hill. And thank you to everybody who is here today presenting remotely and in person, including Mr. Hernandez, Ms. Gist and Mr. On. We appreciate all the comments that are provided and while the council does not respond directly to the public comments during the meeting, we appreciate the input and participation and as was stated earlier we follow up where appropriate and where we're able to do so. Next is my regular report as Chief Justice summarizing my engagement and outreach activities on behalf of the judicial branch since the last business meeting on October 24. Yesterday, I had the privilege of presenting the Judicial Council's highest honor, the Distinguished Services Award, to three outstanding honorees Presiding Justice Arthur Gilbert of the Second District Court of Appeal, Division Six, who has announced he will retire at the end of the year after a monumental 50 years plus of service on the bench. Judge Jonathan Conklin, who was recognized for his 20 years of dedicated service as a Fresno County Superior Court judge and that included two terms of service on this council. Judge Conklin will retire in March, but will continue to assist us lending his time and expertise on council initiatives. And Court Executive Officer Rebecca Fleming of Santa Clara County Superior Court, who's devoted her career to helping strengthen the judicial branch and advancing its mission. The council created these awards more than 30 years ago to honor our dedicated public servants for the breadth and impact of their contributions to advancing the council's strategic goals. I also participated in awarding the Aranda Access to Justice Award cosponsored by the California Judges Association and the California Lawyers Association as well as the Commission on Access to Justice. This award honors judges who have demonstrated a long-term commitment to improving access to our courts and who significantly improved access for low and moderate income Californians. This year's awardees are San Francisco Judge Bruce Chan, founding judicial leader of San Francisco's young adult court, and Los Angeles County Judge Samantha Jessner who as presiding judge of Los Angeles as well as her work on

various council advisory committees has really been instrumental in increasing access for court users and the public. I was pleased to help celebrate all five of these extraordinary members of our branch alongside their family, friends and colleagues. Through their work they help strengthen the public's trust and confidence in our justice system and they serve as role models to future leaders of our judicial branch. Turning to judicial appointments, we had three justices who were unanimously confirmed by the Commission on Judicial Appointments, on which I serve as chair, during hearings last month. The hearings resulted in the confirmations of Justice Matthew Scherb of the Second District Court of Appeal in Los Angeles, Justice Corey Lee as associate justice for the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Two, in Riverside and Justice Arlan Harrell as associate justice of the Fifth District Court of Appeal in Fresno. I welcomed two groups of new judicial officers to my chambers for the New Judge Orientation program, including the group of participants and faculty from yesterday's session who have joined us. I think you're here now. Raise your hand if you're joining us. Welcome. [Applause.] In total, we had 19 judges, 7 commissioners representing 14 counties. I also participated in several outreach activities across the state. I was pleased to extend my congratulations to the San Bernardino County Bar Association on their remarkable 150th anniversary. As I understand, this is an important milestone for the longest continuously active bar association in California. In San Diego, I had the honor of providing a keynote address for the San Diego County Bar Association's Stepping Up to the Bar annual gala. I also presided over a swearing-in ceremony for their new officers. I was joined by numerous state and federal judges and was pleased to help honor Judge Joan Weber and Judge Anthony Battaglia. I also had the opportunity to address justices of our courts of appeal, at the Appellate Justice Institute during a Q&A session that touched on many of the key issues facing our branch, including artificial generative intelligence, federal immigration enforcement actions in California courthouses, and the timely processing of cases. It was an excellent opportunity to hear directly from our appellate bench and to discuss shared priorities for the year ahead. Another major milestone of the branch was the much anticipated return of the in-person Beyond the Bench which first convened in 1988, but returned this year, in person, I think the first time since the pandemic. This major undertaking by our Judicial Council's Center for Families, Children & the Courts brought together more than 1,000 attendees to learn how to better provide meaningful and equal access to justice for children, youth and families involved in our court system. I was pleased to be able to share a message of welcome to the attendees, which included judges, court staff, attorneys, and county agencies as well as the court-appointed special advocates and other professionals. I spoke about our focus on developing a kin-first culture, which we heard about from the special family at our last Judicial Council meeting and the importance of maintaining stability and connection for children and families who interact with our courts. I know Shelley will share more about the conference in her remarks, but from the feedback that we have received so far, I think this was universally welcomed by all participants in person. I presided also over two special sessions with other members of our California Supreme Court. In November in San Francisco we had a special memorial session for Justice Joseph Grodin where we were joined by family members, colleagues and friends to hear about his really remarkable life and honor his legacy with the court. In Los Angeles, we had a special session to honor Justice Jenkins for his five years of service, but there are so much more to what he's done. He is retiring with our

court or has retired with our court after more than 35 years of service. He provided very moving remarks and really it goes without saying he has made long-lasting contributions to this court, to the administration of justice, as well, and he served at virtually every level of our state and federal court system. He will be dearly missed. Also in Los Angeles, I had the honor of attending the Italian American Lawyers Association annual Supreme Court Night, where I was being honored along with Justice Jenkins and Justice Gilbert. This was my fourth year in a row attending, though I learned that Justice Chin has a record of 25 years of attendance. So, apparently I have a long way to go. That concludes my report. Now, we're going to hear from Administrative Director Shelley Curran with her report to you.

>> Good morning, thank you, Chief. Good morning, Chief and members of the council. I'm going to begin my report by asking to call your attention to my regular Administrative Director's written report, included in your materials. That report includes a roundup of all of the activities, many of the activities that the Judicial Council staff has undertaken since our regular business meeting in October except those items that are on the today. The report includes information related to 16 council advisory bodies that met, addressing a broad range of judicial administration issues from implementing the Racial Justice Act and electronic access to court records, to procedures for optional affordable bail determinations and a review of grant applications for the implementation of the Shriver Civil Counsel Act. We have had approximately 46 and training programs and resources that were created, implemented and provided for judicial officers, court personnel, justice system partners. It is pretty remarkable in just that short amount of time. The programs included things like video remote interpreting for court interpreters, unlawful detainer basics, and A.I.-powered legal research tools. As the Chief Justice mentioned, we also had our beyond the bench conference where she said we had over a thousand participants come together, from 75 educational sessions that focused on supporting children and families and other youth in our California court system. I heard an incredible amount of positive feedback. I had the opportunity to be there for a little while myself. And with her permission, I'm going to read a note that I received from Judge Denine Guy. She said this live conference is one of the most dynamic trainings that bench officers receive. The value of bringing all of our court collaborators, which includes our children and parents with lived experience, together to learn from each other is unique and inspiring. Allowing county teams to get away from our daily demands to bond and share this experience is central to bringing people to the table once back home. So much passion and purpose in this room. It warmed my heart to get that note. I think it is a real testament to the value of bringing people together in order to think about how it is that we can work together effectively and collaboratively.

Technology, I'm going to turn my attention to technology and highlight a couple of things that have been happening with the council staff in terms of technology in the last couple of months. Since October, our IT office successfully conducted our annual information technology disaster recovery exercise where we tested our infrastructure network services and branchwide court applications. My great hope is that we do these exercises and years from now we look back and think, gosh, that was a waste of time because nothing ever happened. But we are very proactive in doing that work to make sure that we can continue to provide the services that we need to in the event that something like this comes up. Additionally, we have rolled out our virtual

customer service intelligent chatbot in the county of Sierra for name changes, small claims and traffic case types and for the Sacramento court for name changes and traffic case types. This brings to 11 the total number of courts that are participating in this pilot program. Just want to spend a couple of minutes laying the groundwork for what it is that we might expect coming with the anticipated release of Governor Newsom's budget in January. I think people are very aware of the fact that state revenues have continued to go up and with that I think that there is, you know, a decent amount of optimism about what it is that one might expect going into the budget. But I'm here to add a little bit of reality to that and just let people know that while those revenues have increased, we're also in a position where the deficits and what people are calling the wall of debt is actually increasing. That is the case for a couple of different reasons. One, Proposition 98 required that a certain amount of state revenues goes to fund community colleges in K through 12 education. There is an obligation to fund that and also to settle up in years when the state has not met all of its obligations related to Proposition 98. The second initiative that the state needs to provide automatic funding for is Proposition 2, passed in 2014, that has to do with the rainy day fund and so the state is required to add additional funds to the rainy day fund as well. So while our revenues are up, the actual deficit that the state is looking at is actually increased as well because of those factors, in addition to some other costs that have come about and changes in federal law that impact the California state budget as well. Unlike the LAO, the Governor is able to provide solutions to his budgets. We imagine there will be some budget solutions that are included. But I just wanted to take a minute to kind of lay some groundwork as we go into the January budget, what we might expect from that and the work we're going to be doing all spring and then going into the summer on the state budget. Speaking of next year, and what is coming up, the council's 100th anniversary is happening in 2026. As part of the year that we will be looking at, we're going to take a look at the council's strategic plan, the plan was last reaffirmed by the council, by this body, at our December 2022 meeting. We're going to discuss the current plan and seek input on potential changes with both the trial courts and the appellate courts during the respective meetings in January. We'll conduct additional outreach to internal and external stakeholders and open an informal invitation to comment period, have an informal invitation to comment period later on in 2026. We'll be bringing this back, of course, to all of you for further discussion with the goal of placing it on the December 2026 business meeting agenda. I mentioned discussing the plan with the presenting judges and court executive officers of the trial courts when they convene with their advisory committees in January. With respect to those two groups, I wanted to highlight some changes that are going on there. During 2025, ten new court executive officers were appointed to their positions at local courts. And come 2026, January 2026, we will have 22 of our 58 trial courts with new presiding judges in this state. As we do for the members of this governing body, who are presiding judges and court executive officers, in their respective courts, we value the tremendous knowledge, perspective, expertise and experience that trial court leaders bring to the table as the council is doing its work. Speaking of leadership, I'd also like to acknowledge our new JCC director of Leadership Support Services, Amber Barnett. She's been with the council for years. And since being here, she has served in a leadership role in Leadership Support Services. So we're very grateful to Amber for her willingness to step up to the plate and take that new work on and very appreciative of really the seamless transition we have had over

the course of the last several weeks since Amber has been here. A great thank you to Amber. Finally, as we wrap up this year, I want to thank all of you. And thank the council staff for the continued work that you all are doing, that we all are doing in order to serve Californians and continue to advance access to justice for all Californians.

>> Thank you. Thank you for your helpful report. Next we have consent agenda that has about ten items on there. As you know, the council's Executive and Planning Committee set items on the consent and discussion agendas to try to optimize the best use of our meeting time. The council's Rules Committee provides guidance to the Executive and Planning Committee on agenda setting relating to rules proposals. The fact that an item is on the consent agenda is not a reflection of its significance, because any council member can elevate or ask to have an item removed from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda if they believe it would benefit from further discussion and deliberation. As always, we appreciate the many hours of work that is put in and council staff that have been able these recommendations and reports to come before us for consideration. At this time, I'll ask if there are any members who would like to comment on any of the consent agenda items before we vote. Yes, Ms. Nelson.

>> Thank you, Chief. I'm a member of the Legislation Committee and I think on this particular consent agenda, the items today include two proposals that are sponsored legislation by the Legislation Committee and obviously from the Judicial Council. Both of those items are intended to improve court operations and to provide better service to the public. I guess I'm noting this only because it is an important reminder to all of us and to all of the council committees that we don't just remark on legislation that may come before us, but we also sponsor legislation. And that can be done in a way to really improve the administration of justice throughout the state. So I would encourage all of the advisory bodies, others, to review matters so that they can come to us with proposals that can be presented for potential legislation that could help in the future. The ones that are on the consent agenda today relate to collections of court-ordered fees and fines and also to allow notice of court-ordered child custody mediation to be provided electronically. None of these were put out for public comment and received any negative comments, which I think is very positive and also an indication of how important this kind of legislation can be. And I just wanted to make that note.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. We appreciate that. Anyone else? Anything to discuss? If not, I'll entertain a motion to move approval. Yes.

>> Excuse me, Madam Chief Justice. I don't want to remove anything from the consent calendar, but ask that I be noted as an abstaining on legislative proposals making no judgment or assessment as to their appropriateness, but because of my position, I choose to be noted as abstaining.

>> Okay, thank you, Senator Umberg. I will ask for a motion to move approval.

>> Moved.

>> Thank you, Judge Moorman.

>> I'll second.

>> Thank you, Ms. Nelson. We have a first and a second. All those in favor, say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> Any nos? Okay. And we noted Senator Umberg's abstention on item 25-036 and 25-187. And with that abstention, the consent agenda is approved. Thank you. We have five discussion agenda items for today. Our first item will be considering children's waiting room fund balance cap adjustments. This is agenda item 25-042. We welcome our presenters, Judge Conklin, who is joining us remotely, also the Distinguished Service Award recipient. We're going to keep saying that, as well as Judge Mark Juhas, also welcome, he's appearing remotely and we have Ms. Rebecca Fleming, guess what, a Distinguished Service Award recipient. Welcome. Thank you.

>> Thank you so much. On behalf of me and my family, thank you for such a wonderful day yesterday. To you and all the council members, I'm turning to the first item mentioned by the Chief and that is 25-042, the children's waiting room fund balance I think the screen is about to be shared. I'm joined today by Mark Juhas from the superior court and Rebecca Fleming. Rebecca Fleming previously noted, who was so deserving yesterday. But thank you very much. Also, now, turning to the slides and presenting the children's waiting room issue. Just to briefly give an introduction of this before I turn it over to Judge Juhas and to Ms. Fleming, turning first to slide number two. Children's waiting rooms are an important way to make our courts more accessible to families throughout the state. The centers provide a safe and supervised space for children and allow parents and guardians to focus on their court responsibilities on behalf of the children that are accompanying them to court for those hearings. The service reduces barriers to participation to the court system and supports access to justice for families, some key goals of court system. This revenue and the revenue stream helps these courts provide these centers with a dedicated revenue stream to establish and operate children's waiting rooms to cover essential costs of those waiting rooms including staff, rent, utilities, furnishings and supplies. Slide four, please. The Judicial Council's approved children's waiting room distribution and fund balance policy accomplishes many goals. It sets a cap on the fund balance that a court can maintain for the specific children's waiting room funds. It requires courts to report to the Judicial Council every odd year concerning those fund balances. And requires that any excess funds over the cap that governs these funds be returned to the Trial Court Trust Fund. It finally provides a process to allow courts to request just what we're going through today to request an increase in the cap

when needed to support the operation of the children's funds or reallocation of the funds. To request an increase in the cap when needed to support the operation of the children's funds or reallocation of these funds. I provided an overview for you for the fund source for children's waiting rooms and the council's policies regarding the fund balances. I'm now going to turn to Judge Juhas to provide you a full picture of the benefits to representatives, those two court representatives are here to share their experiences with the children's waiting room, turning first to Judge Juhas. Welcome and thank you.

>> Thank you very much. First, I'd like to congratulate both you and Rebecca Fleming. Remarkably well deserved awards. Having said that, I'm a family law judge in Los Angeles. I get the benefit of the children's waiting room, and I'm going to say a couple of things. First of all, I think the waiting room allows for children's safety. Without a child waiting room, the child may be in a courtroom, which is an inappropriate place for a child to be, or a child might end up out in the hall, where he or she may have some supervision or inadequate supervision while the court process is going on in the courtroom. If the child is in the courtroom, obviously he or she will be exposed to things he or she shouldn't be exposed to. Again, out in the public hall, the child, you know, the safety of the child becomes really, really quite important. Also, I think that from a promotion of access to justice standpoint, child waiting rooms allow the judge to have comfort that the child is safe and adequately cared for, while the court process is ongoing. More importantly, though, I think the parents or guardians have confidence that the child is adequately safely cared for in an environment where there is things for the kid to do, interact with other children, their safety, that sort of thing for the child. Additionally I think it is important to point out that should there be a custodial change along the way, a child waiting room is a place that allows for safe place for that custodial change to occur. Finally, part of the procedural fairness is to know that the court is being supportive and open to a family, having child court waiting rooms allows that parent to know that the court is concerned about the child, concerned about the child's safety, concerned about the legal process being handled and allow the child some distance from all of that going on. We have added a few extra photographs, just to give you a sense of sort of what these child waiting rooms look like around the state. This is the one in Los Angeles. As you can see from this photograph and the ones that we're going to show here in a moment, there is a lot of activities, there is a lot of color, a lot of areas for a child to do things, to be safe and during the process of the court, to keep entertained and to keep busy. As a personal aside, I went down to the child waiting room for just a moment to try to look around a little bit and get a sense sort of what it looked like. They wouldn't let me in if I didn't have a kid in the child waiting room. That made me feel really comfortable as a judge that these kids are safe and well cared for while the child process is going on. The next slide is the Superior Court of San Francisco County. Again, the same sort of thing, lots of activities, books, coloring, that sort of thing for a child to do. Next we have the Superior Court of Sacramento County, Superior Court of San Mateo County. You see the theme here. Lots of things for kids to do, safe place for them while mom or the guardian or whomever is doing their business in the court. So, now it is my opportunity to pass the baton to Rebecca Fleming. And this is a picture of her brand new Santa Clara new children's waiting room, to talk about the court administrator perspective. Ms. Fleming?

>> Thank you, Judge Juhas, and thank you to the council for having the opportunity to show the value of having our children's waiting rooms in the courts. We have just reopened our children's waiting rooms after a fairly long closure post-COVID. And so we recognize in Santa Clara and across the state that these rooms provide a welcoming age appropriate space for our young visitors. But they also bring an important administrative benefit that supports families, staff, and the overall experience for those who come into our buildings. When children have a cheerful, safe place designed especially for them, parents and care givers are able to move through their responsibilities with greater ease. They can ask questions, fill out forms and receive assistance without feeling rushed or pulled in multiple directions. This allows families to navigate their time in the courthouse more comfortably and help staff to make clear guidance and more efficient use of their time. Many families arriving at our courthouse are managing a wide range of life challenges. Providing a supportive resource for their children removes an additional layer of stress and ensures that every parent, regardless of their circumstance, has the opportunity to participate fully in what they need to accomplish. Offering this option shows that the court is attentive to the well-being of both the parents and the children and committed to treating all visitors with care and respect. When community members see a dedicated child friendly space, it sends a strong message the court understands the realities families face and has thoughtfully prepared for them. This kind of visible support helps visitors feel welcomed rather than intimidated, making their experience more positive from the moment they walk in the door. It also enables staff and partners to interact with families in a more calm and focused environment, which enhances overall service quality, excuse me. A children's waiting room is not just a helpful addition, it is an essential infrastructure. It supports children with care, supports parents with peace of mind, and supports the court by fostering an environment that is responsive and truly family friendly. Investing in these spaces reinforces our branch's commitment to fairness, respect and meaningful service for every member of the community. Thank you and I will turn it back to Judge Conklin. Thank you.

>> Thank you so much for those very important comments and back to this as previously mentioned, the Judicial Council's policy does regard the court's operate the children's waiting rooms to report the council every odd year. So the Fiscal Planning Subcommittee presents the following recommendations to you. First, that nine courts have agreed to reductions, reductions or to reduce 1.7 million from their children's waiting room fund balances, which will exceed the authorized cap. This funding will then be returned to the Trial Court Trust Fund by returning that funding to the fund. These nine courts determined the existing resources and their fund balance are sufficient to operate and maintain these rooms. So, candidly it is a model of efficiency for those courts and due to that efficiency, the funds. Five courts have requested an increase to their fund balance caps, the total adjustments are \$5.2 million and the details for each individual court request are found in the materials provided to each of you. The fund balance adjustments will allow the trial courts to continue to operate their children's waiting rooms without interruption. And to provide critical services to children and family as Judge Juhas and Ms. Fleming have summarized for you. This concludes our presentation on this item and we're happy to answer any questions any council member may have.

>> Thank you to each of our presenters. It was noted that although not a requirement for being a presenter, Shelley reminded that Judge Juhas was a Distinguished Service Award recipient in 2017 and Aranda Award recipient in 2023. Thank you for your presentation. Are there any questions for our presenters?

>> I don't have a question, I have a comment.

>> Yes.

>> I just want to segue from Judge Conklin's last remarks that this funding apparatus is a splendid example of the Judicial Council's not only transparency in this aspect of our funding, but also how efficiently we are using this money because of the biannual review that occurs, trial courts have to evaluate, how they use it, how much they need, and they honestly and transparently discover when they don't, they turn it back, and we can then support these five courts, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara and Santa Clara with their expanded financial needs using the same money that has been allocated. So, the need is apparent. Thank you for the presentation. As my role as chair of budget, I always want to call out a really splendid example of a funding mechanism and our oversight. I think it is excellent. And thank you, all, very, very much.

>> Thank you, Judge Moorman. In particular for the valuable service that these children's waiting rooms provide. I think we're all familiar with that. So, agreed. Thank you. Anyone else? If not, I'll entertain a motion to move approval of the recommendations.

>> So moved.

>> Justice Eurie. Is there a second? Judge Hernandez, thank you. All of those in favor, please say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> Any nos? Any abstentions? Thank you.

>> This is David Slayton. I would abstain, please, thank you.

>> Thank you. With one abstention, this item is approved. Thank you, again. Our second item relates to a report on our Trial Court Trust Fund. Funds held on behalf of the trial courts for fiscal year 2024-2025. This is item number 25-041. We welcome our presenters who are with us

here today, Judge Conklin, thank you, again. We have Presiding Judge Maria Hernandez with the Orange County Superior Court, Ms. Kate Bieker now with the Superior Court of Ventura County. And Mr. Zlatko Theodorovic of Budget Services. Welcome.

>> Thank you, Chief. I'm proud to be joined by each of those folks that you also just highlighted. This presentation today as the Chief summarized is the Trial Court Trust Funds held on behalf of the trial courts, turning to our first slide. These funds are held on behalf of trial courts in this program is an important fiscal tool to help trial courts fully utilize their operational budgets. It is especially valuable when resources for courts are limited. So this comes to you after thorough vetting from the Fiscal Planning Subcommittee of the Trial Court Budget Committee. The program allows courts to use the funds above their 3% statutory cap that I believe you're all aware of, that's the limitation on how much money they can keep to continue using those funds, available funds for ongoing projects. The courts that participate in this program utilize these funds for one time projects or purchases that support their operational needs and meet contractual obligations. While it might not be an appropriate analogy, if any of you have been through a home improvement project, you know they never go as planned. They take longer than you think. And many times they end up being more expensive than you think and this is an example of how responsible these courts are and how helpful this allows them to complete the very important projects. Moving to slide three, the funds held on behalf of program was adopted by the council in April of 2016. It was established in recognition that courts have limited resources to meet their operational needs due to the fund balance cap, the 3% cap that we just mentioned. It was developed in consultation with the department of finance. So they were a team in getting the funds held on behalf of, approved for the court's benefit. The process uses funding above the 3% cap for this program and it is fully transparent. And annually trial courts submit their funds held on behalf of project requests to the Fiscal Planning Subcommittee of the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee and then this council considers it. As you know, these meetings are public and the courts are interested stakeholders and can review the funding need. These reports are thorough, and are well vetted by Budget Services staff as they come to the Fiscal Planning Subcommittee. It is an annual report on the status and expenditure of all previously approved projects to the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee. It is presented in a public meeting that we hold that FPS holds. And it is published at the Judicial Council's website. These reports are available for review. The funding for approve request is held in the TCF, held in the Trial Court Trust Fund and courts are reimbursed. So the funds are held there, the courts put in for those funds held on their behalf and reimbursed for the actual expenditures through the monthly distributions. That allows the courts to also keep very careful track of how these funds are maintained. The courts don't receive any of this money unless it is spent on the projects approved by the council. Held by the council, given by the council, only upon the request and approval of the courts. Next slide, please. The funds held on behalf of held courts plan for important projects and purchases that often cannot be covered within their current operating year. Again, as has previously noted. Examples of allowable requests that these courts can utilize these funds for are technology or infrastructure upgrades such as audio and visual equipment and upgrades to courtrooms enhancing access to justice, court facilities maintenance or repairs are allowed under rule

10.810 of the California Rules of Court, such as replacement of carpeting or flooring. Efficiency projects for court services including online and smart forms for court users. The replacement of court equipment like vehicles, copy machines or furniture that are used by the courts every day and very important task and finally projects that require multiyear services to complete. For example, the purchase and deployment of a new case management system. And which is frequently a multiyear project Fresno is experiencing that right now. Very important. Next slide, please. So the highlight this program, there is \$103 million approved in project requests that does not include new requests for the fiscal year 24-25 submission cycle before you today for consideration. Trial courts are encouraged to use the program, which helps them maintain their available resources to meet their court's operational needs, while the number of participant courts varies each year, increasing number of courts have been using the program in recent years, we attribute that to the public meetings that are held. This also is a very important message that is sent out at other meetings to encourage courts when appropriate to utilize these funds to their own benefit. It is good news that the project is funded by this program with access to justice and to share some of the good news you, I'm going to turn this over to Judge Hernandez to explain how her courts uses the funds and how it benefits the program.

>> Thank you very much, good morning, Chief Guerrero and fellow council members. Thank you for this opportunity to share with you the importance of this critical program. And how it makes it available for us to utilize the limited resources that we have and meet our contractual obligations that otherwise would not be met. I'm going to go right off what Judge Moorman commented about. This is a mechanism for us with transparency and oversight by the council to do and meet the needs for access to justice so thank you for commenting on that, Judge Moorman, this program is another program just like it. You heard from Judge Conklin just earlier now, that we'll be asking for your approval of the applications for the 2024-25 cycle. You'll find your materials at 25-041 for the complete listing. Ms. Bieker and I are hoping to share just a few of the projects that we have submitted from our counties and the tremendous impact that it has for us and the critical use of the allotment of dollars and funds that can be put and held on behalf and aside beyond that cap fund. We have all budgetary constraints that we are all facing. And this FHOB, another acronym, we all love acronyms, with those uncertainties to allow us to complete the programs, complete the resources and the projects. As you will see on the slides here, we have submitted applications in three areas, including our maintenance areas of facility buildings, our security and, of course, the infrastructure on our technology. What I can share with you, starting off with that fire, life and safety project, it is a long-term three-phase project which temporarily old buildings, we all live in old facilities, I live in a building older than myself, which means it is really old, I was temporarily housed for a six to nine-month period. I'm still in that temporary location. All the expenditures that go with that that are not covered in the contract in the program with the fire marshal include as Judge Conklin said, paintings, flooring, carpeting, cubicles, equipment and enormous cost to us. This is the only way we can facilitate and complete the projects. And, again, that provides access to justice for our public. And keeping us all safe. We go right into security upgrades for our facilities as well. As you'll see in the materials, we are upgrading nonballistic barriers for us for our weapons screening areas. Tinting on our windows so we're keeping the public coming in,

our staff, our judicial officers, anybody who enters those buildings safe. Our elevators, we all know in old buildings the elevators just aren't safe. These are projects that we know as courts we have the costs. This is a way for us to be able to complete those. And finally, with technology, technology is ever changing. These one-time projects that some will hit up into the millions of dollars for some of us larger courts, 17 million for us when we're talking about case management systems ending end of life. This is how we can accomplish and successfully move into transitioning that infrastructure, that case management, and, again, it truly reflects on an equal access to justice and future and forward-facing for the public. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Ms. Bieker who will explain and share with a couple of the projects that they have submitted.

>> Thank you, Judge Hernandez. Chief Justice and members of the council, thank you for the opportunity to speak today on benefits of using funds held on behalf for courts. As noted earlier, I'm here in my role as court executive officer for the Ventura Superior Court. I had been with Ventura for seven months. The court is currently in its transformative era. We are taking the time to re-evaluate priorities and critical needs to move the court forward. As other courts have already transitioned to advanced case management systems, modernized courtroom technology, we too have found the need to do the same. Our legacy case management system and associated technologies are decades old. And courtrooms lack remote equipment that would greatly improve our efficiency and access to those we serve. Ventura turned to the funds held on behalf program to replace these systems to begin the process to save funds for these capital endeavors which will require multiple years to accumulate the necessary funds to execute our plan. We currently have two submissions to achieve these goals. The first, to complete the installation of hybrid remote appearance technology in the remaining 11 courtrooms. Previously the court had to prioritize certain courtrooms over others due to resource constraints. However, with the savings from the prior fiscal year, we're now in a position to complete the project in full. Some remaining funds will be used for smaller projects that again this benefit has allowed us to plan for resources and priorities with so many on our plate. The second is an amendment to previously designated funds, these funds were originally intended to support costly upgrades to a county legacy system. And upgrade the county ultimately the court ultimately decided not to pursue. Instead, we are moving to a modern court installed system that will serve all case types and provide both a public and justice partner portal including electronic access to court documents and additional enhancements. With uncertainties that we face each year related to budgetary appropriations, the FHOB resource provided courts with the mechanism to set aside any surplus funds each year without the risk of entering into contracts that would be difficult to fulfill during fiscal downturns. Rather, it allows courts like Ventura to save funds for these projects without the risk of overexceeding our 3% fund cap balance. We believe that leveraging funds held on behalf to enhance service quality improved technology and strengthen accountability demonstrates the court's commitment to responsible stewardship. Thank you, again, for this opportunity to present, and I will now turn it back to Judge Conklin.

>> Ms. Bieker and Judge Hernandez, thank you for the presentations. It hopefully shows how effective and necessary the funds held are. Getting right to it, the subcommittee is asking for

approval of 47 requests this year, totaling \$17.1 million. These are new funding requests for brand-new projects submitted by the trial courts and then 19 amended requests totaling 26.9 million. The amended requests typically add additional funding to previously approved projects to adjust the amount needed and the timeline for those projects, again referring back to all improvement projects. With that, Chief, we ask that the council consider and approve the recommendations.

>> Thank you. We thank all the presenters. I think it was particularly helpful to see the specific examples that were provided and the real impact on the courts and the public. That was helpful. Is there any questions or comments for these presenters before we take a vote? Okay. I see none. With that, is there a motion to move approval of the 57 requests?

>> I'll move approval.

>> Okay. I heard Judge Crompton with approval. Justice Hill second. All in favor, please say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Any nos or abstentions? This item is approved. Thank you, again.

>> Thank you, Chief, thank you, council.

>> Thank you. Our third item is agenda item 25-179. Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules. The 2026 edition for traffic, boating, forestry, fish and game public utilities, parks and recreation and business licensing. We welcome our presenters who are with us, Justice Stacy Boulware Eurie, chair of the Judicial Council Legislation Committee, Ms. Katy Grant, member of the Judicial Council's Traffic Advisory Committee, and Ms. Jamie Schechter, Judicial Council Criminal Justice Services. Thank you.

>> Good morning, Chief. I'm going to stall here just a moment as our PowerPoint comes up on the screen.

>> Yes.

>> For all of us present and those watching at home or at work. Excellent. Thank you, again. Thank you and good morning, Chief, fellow council members. Every December, the Judicial Council reviews and adopts a new addition of the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules, UBPS. Yes, there we go. Another one. The UBPS is a truly voluminous document and the updates are proposed by the Traffic Advisory Committee. So you may ask, what is the basis for the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules? And why is it so important for court administration? Today, we are going to hear from Ms. Katy Grant, CEO of Monterey County Superior Court and member of

the Traffic Advisory Committee, as well as Ms. Jamie Schechter, lead staff to the Traffic Advisory Committee. Ms. Grant.

>> Thank you so much. Thank you so much, Chief and members of the council. I'm Katy Grant. I'm CEO of Monterey Superior Court. And a member of the Traffic Advisory Committee and I'm here to give a brief summary of the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedule, which court operations rely heavily upon in each of their traffic divisions. I'll start with what the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedule is not. It is not cash bail. In other words, it is not the amount set to be paid in order for a person to be released from custody on a criminal charge. The UBPS instead establishes the penalty schedules for vehicle code infractions or traffic tickets. Beyond vehicle code infractions, the UBPS includes seven other schedules. Traffic misdemeanors, boating, forestry, fish and game, public utilities, parks and recreation, and business licensing. These different schedules were added over the years with suggested bail fine amounts for standardization and based on request of those different agencies. Unlike for vehicle code infractions, the penalty amounts in the UBPS for other laws are suggested and not mandatory. The UBPS also is not comprehensive for all offenses other than vehicle code infractions. There are, for instance, no penal code offenses, except some regarding fines. Or health and safety code violations. And finally, most courts must implement the infraction traffic schedule, though some may exceed it due to legislative mandates. Next slide. So why is the UBPS important? It is important because the Judicial Council statutorily is required to annually adopt a traffic penalty schedule for all vehicle code infractions. And it is important because the courts need access to these new or the same penalties starting January 1 each year. The amount set for vehicle code infractions serve as the amounts for traffic tickets. It is also important because the vehicle code allows defendants to pay the entire amount of a traffic ticket up front in the form of bail. And then forfeit the bail. This eliminates that person's need to appear for court or any court appearances. I'll turn it over to Jamie, my fellow member of the Traffic Advisory Committee.

>> Hi, good morning. Thank you. Annual changes to the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules are based primarily on new legislation. So during the Governor's signing deadline, after all bills are enrolled, I go through all bills that could potentially impact the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules by adding a crime, eliminating a crime, changing a fine or fee or adding a subdivision, et cetera. Then the Traffic Advisory Committee considers all the new laws that could potentially impact uniform bail and penalty schedules. Another source for changes are recommendations from stakeholders. It is usually courts. But also law enforcement organizations or members of the public, those can come in throughout the year, and are part of the development process that the Traffic Advisory Committee considers as well. And a third type of changes are technical changes and minor corrections for things like formatting issues or other errors. Something that basically clearly should not be in the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules. And those changes can be things that staff noticed or they can also be part of the stakeholder request. The Traffic Advisory Committee will normally have one or more long meetings to consider all the potential changes for the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules and then recommend a draft uniform bail and penalty schedule to go out for public comment.

Usually it is the same day as this long meeting. After the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedule goes out for public comment, the committee then reviews the comments, makes changes as necessary, and recommends a final Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules to the Judicial Council. What you have before you today is the recommended Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules for 2026. After the Judicial Council adopts the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules which will hopefully be today, it is distributed to the courts. Why are the timelines tight? The Governor's signing deadline alternates between around September 30 and October 15 every year. This year it was October 13. All of the steps from the last slide must occur in time to give courts an updated Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules by January 1. So, everything is very compressed. Courts need adequate time to update the court management systems so they have a final Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules by mid-December. If you adopt the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules today, it will hopefully be posted online later today and then distributed to courts today or Monday. I'll turn it back to Ms. Grant.

>> There is some amount of new legislation regarding e-bikes. However, most of the other recommended changes are minor. We are requesting the Judicial Council adopt the recommended 2026 Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedule. Our key takeaways are that the UBPS sets the base fine for vehicle code infractions, recommends the base fine for other infractions and that a few misdemeanor offenses. And that the Judicial Council must adopt annually. And that it is time sensitive and requires the council's approval. Thank you.

>> Thank you to each of the presenters. We really appreciate that overview on the proposed recommendation to adopt the new bail schedule. I'll ask if there are any questions for our presenters or comments on this agenda item. Seeing none, I'll ask for a motion to move approval.

>> So moved.

>> Thank you, Justice Eurie. Is there a second?

>> Judge Wood seconds.

>> I saw Senator Umberg raise his hand first.

>> I'll defer.

>> Okay. Well, I don't know if this is a good question, does verbal outweigh visual?

>> I'll withdraw.

>> Okay, thank you. Thank you.

>> Chief, I would add as this has traffic commissioner, this is near and dear to my heart.

>> I'll go with the second.

>> Before we take a vote, maybe we should thank Ms. Schechter publicly for reviewing every.

>> Yes, thank you so much. [Applause.]

>> And I would just like to comment that I appreciate that there is no reckless horseback riding. My horse continues to be my vehicle.

>> Should say yet. Maybe we should vote now before there is any change. Okay. Looks like it is unanimous. To make it official, all those in favor say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> Any nos or abstentions? Okay, this item is approved. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Okay. Next we have our fourth item on the agenda, this is item 25-177. California Court Interpreter Workforce Study. We welcome our presenters, Ms. Anabel Romero, vice chair of the Judicial Council Court Interpreters Advisory Panel, who is appearing remotely, and Mr. Douglas Denton, Judicial Council's Leadership Support Services. So whenever you're ready.

>> Good morning. And thank you. Good morning to, Chief Justice and Judicial Council members. My presentation today highlights findings of California Court Interpreter Workforce Study, which is crucial to understanding the current state of our court interpreter services. This study aims to address the challenges faced by our court interpreter workforce, and to propose actionable recommendations for the future. I'm joined here today by Douglas Denton from Language Access Services and he and I will take turns presenting the information and then allow time for any questions or comments. Douglas?

>> Thank you, Anabel. Good morning, Chief and council members. The purpose of the study as mandated by Assembly Bill 1032 is to assess the availability of court interpreters and to provide recommendations to the Legislature. This effort is timely as it aims to ensure that the court interpreter workforce is adequately prepared to meet the needs of California's diverse population. The findings will be instrumental in shaping policies that enhance interpreter services and accessibility in the judicial system. The methodology of the study involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches, gathering insights from various stakeholders.

Participants which are shown here included court executive officers, interpreters, and representatives from labor organizations, among others. Each group provided valuable input on the challenges and opportunities within the interpreter workforce. This comprehensive approach ensures that the findings reflect a wide range of perspectives, which is essential to developing effective recommendations and policy. This slide addresses the pressing issue of an aging workforce, and declining numbers of court interpreter employees. Notably about 33% of the credentialed court interpreter workforce is at retirement age, 65 years and older. This finding coincides with the trending decrease and the number of court interpreter employees.

Understanding these dynamics will help us strategize on how to attract and retain new talent in this critical field. Interpreter pay presents a complex issue as it is sometimes lower in the state system compared to federal and private sectors. However, the average salary for full time California court interpreters is relatively high on a national scale, and the value of court interpreter employment is also augmented by benefits. While these benefits contribute to overall compensation, many interpreters prefer the flexibility that comes with contracting. This underscores the importance of a balanced approach to compensation that addresses both financial and lifestyle preferences and ensuring that court employment remains appealing. This slide presents data on workforce bottlenecks, particularly focusing on the average pass rates for California's court interpreter certification exams. The passage rates for certified interpreters even with near passer training indicates barriers of entry into the position. I'll turn it back to Anabel.

>> Thank you, Douglas. This slide represents stakeholder consensus which was important for understanding and addressing the challenges with the interpreter workforce. There was broad agreement among stakeholders that key recommendations for improvement should include ensuring adequate funding for competitive compensation, increasing mentorship, and apprenticeship opportunities. As well as developing a structured career pathways and utilizing interpreting to mitigate shortages. These strategies aim to create a more robust pipeline for future interpreters and enhance service delivery across the state. This next slide represents legislative recommendations in the study, which focused on sustaining and expanding interpreter services. Continued funding and support are essential for maintaining quality services. While expansion of pilot programs can help test new approaches to the workforce development program. Adjusting legislation such as the 100 day rule, which limits how unqualified contractors may assist an individual court could improve access to interpreters. And promoting career pathways through education and outreach programs which will be crucial for attracting new talent to this field. The Judicial Council's considerations include reviewing exam standards and developing structured career paths for interpreters. Allowing carryover scoring for certified languages can also streamline the certification process. Additionally, creating a directory of VI trained interpreters and expanding access of American Sign Language and emerging language interpreters will enhance capability for all Californians. Court considerations emphasize collaboration with the Judicial Council to build a pool of ready interpreters. Regular review of compensation packages are also necessary to ensure that court employment remains competitive and draws more interested interpreters. Training staff and remote interpreting skills and leveraging technology will be to adopting to the evolving needs

of the court system while also fostering the next generation of interpreters through mentorship. In conclusion, by implementing we can expand the workforce. The studies offer a road map for the branch to improve interpreter services for the public we serve and to ensure our goals of high quality, equitable access for all Californians, regardless of the language they speak. We will begin testing and certification strategies informed by this study and its findings and we will look forward to returning with additional recommendations to support workforce expansion. In closing, I want to acknowledge that several advisory bodies are working together with council staff to improve interpreter services. This study reflects that collective and collaborative effort. We appreciate your ongoing support and do recommend approval to submit this study to the Legislature. And with that, this concludes our presentation and we are open to any questions or comments.

>> Thank you. We appreciate the presentation and the importance of recruiting and retaining court interpreters to the public to understand the proceedings that they're participating in. I'll open it up for any questions or comments on this item. Okay, seeing none, I'll ask for a motion to move approval.

>> So moved.

>> Second.

>> Okay, wait. I think I heard Presiding Judge Hernandez move approval and I didn't catch the second.

>> Judge Moorman.

>> Thank you.

>> All in favor please say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> Any nos or abstentions? Thank you, this item is unanimously approved. We appreciate your presentation again.

>> Thank you.

>> Our fifth and last item on the agenda is the discussion on our Judicial Council's 2026 legislative priorities. This is item number 25-184 on the agenda. We welcome our presenters, Ms. Stacy Boulware Eurie, the chair of the Judicial Council Legislation Committee, and Mr. Cory Jasperson, director for Judicial Council Government Affairs.

>> Cory is sitting very far away from me this morning. Thank you, Chief and fellow members of the council. Each year the Legislation Committee comes to the council to set forth the intended recommendations for the upcoming year. For 2026, and as explained in greater detail in our report, for the council and to the council, which are contained in our materials for today, we are recommending the continuation of the council's efforts to pursue sufficient funding to address cost increases and to enable courts to plan for the future. Also to improve the physical, online and cybersecurity of each court. We are recommending the continued advocate for sufficient resources to improve physical access and increase remote access for our courts. We know how critically important that continues to be. As well as to implement innovations in programs and services. We are also recommending the ability to seek funding for needed judgeships. I don't have to tell this audience how important that is, particularly down in our southern counties. As council member Gretchen Nelson noted earlier, the council also has the ability to enable the Legislation Committee to sponsor and support legislation to improve judicial branch operational efficiencies, including cost savings. Our recommendations include promoting the availability of verbatim records of proceedings, by working to address court reporter shortages utilizing all available tools. We are recommending the authority to seek legislative authorization for the disposition of any unused courthouses. And pursuant to rule 10.12, subdivision A of the California Rules of Court, we are seeking the delegated authority for our committee to take positions on behalf of the council on proposed legislation, administrative rules or regulations, and proposals by other bodies or agencies.

>> This slide represents a high level overview of the process for Judicial Council sponsored legislation. We had a couple of items on consent, a little bit earlier, that went through this process. And sometimes it is more iterative than the one arrow going up on the more complex proposals that may go through the process a couple of times. But we received input from internally within the Judicial Council, the courts, external partners, that would get assigned to the appropriate subject matter advisory committee. Sometimes the advisory committees are putting forth their own recommendations. Everything goes through public invitation to comment and approval here at the Judicial Council and then ultimately in the Judicial Council sponsored legislation. My team in Sacramento will find the appropriate assembly member or senator and get the bill introduced in the Legislature.

>> Chief, our recommendations for the 2026 year are in the context of furthering the objectives of the council's strategic plan for the branch and the mission of the council and also to advance that mission. Again, I know our council members are familiar, but for those who may be viewing, we are here to improve the quality and advance the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice in California's courts. And, again, I would be remiss without acknowledging and thanking the dedicated staff of the Office of Governmental Affairs for their tireless efforts. This year, in 2025, there were over 2800 bills introduced in the Legislature and the dynamic staff reviewed and analyzed 829 bills. Their lawyers and staff do this and further support the work of the Legislation Committee and none of it could be done

without them. So I want to acknowledge and thank both them and their fearless leader, Cory Jasperson. With that, Chief, we conclude our report. Happy to answer any questions.

>> I think that deserves a round of applause. [Applause.] Thank you. Are there any questions or comments? Okay. Seeing none, I'll ask for a motion to move approval of the recommendations.

>> I'll move. Gretchen.

>> Thank you, Ms. Nelson. Is there a second?

>> I second.

>> Thank you for the second and I'll ask for a vote. All in favor of the recommendations, please say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> I'll ask if there are any nos. Okay, none. Abstentions, I will be abstaining from the recommendation number four, which was in the materials and that relates to the verbatim records. Are there any other abstentions?

>> Yes, I abstain as well.

>> On that item?

>> On that item, yes.

>> Okay. With those two abstentions on that item, the motion passes. Thank you.

>> Thank you, Chief.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. Okay. Thank you. And as a final item for the Judicial Council meeting, I would like to remind everybody that the chairs of the council's Executive and Planning, Rules, Legislation, Budget, and Technology Committees have internal reports, have written reports that have been prepared and are in our materials. That concludes our business meeting for today. Our next regularly scheduled business meeting will be not until February 19 and 20. I also wanted to echo what Shelley mentioned earlier as we look ahead to 2026. We have an important milestone on the horizon and as you know, that's, or should know or now will know, the Judicial Council's 100th anniversary will be in 2026. This centennial offers us time to reflect

on a century of service and opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to excellence and focus on ensuring access to justice for all. So, thank you, again, to each and every one of you on the council for all your dedicated service throughout the year. And staff, thank you so much. We couldn't do our work without you. And I look forward to the work that we will continue to do together as we approach this historic anniversary in 2026. Merry Christmas, happy holidays, happy New Year to all of you. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.